



Church reflects on 60 years since *Nostra Aetate*

Sixty years ago, a small, but significant document was presented to the Church at the Second Vatican Council - *Nostra Aetate* (“In Our Times”).

Promulgated on 28 October 1965, the smallest of the Second Vatican Council’s documents urged deeper relationships and understanding of the multiple inter-religious beliefs of the whole human family.

Pope John Paul II and Pope Benedict XVI called it the *Magna Carta* of the Church’s new attitude and approach to other religions.

Pope Francis also took major steps to promote interfaith relations and Pope Leo XIV has indicated his desire to pursue dialogue and build bridges.

The Bishops Commission for Christian Unity and Inter-religious Dialogue has published a booklet of reflections on *Nostra Aetate* to mark its 60th anniversary.

“We hope that *Nostra Aetate* will continue to inspire and to guide Catholics in forging relationships of mutual respect and collaboration with believers from other religions,” commission chair Archbishop Amel Nona said.

The booklet exhorts the Church to engage in dialogue and collaboration with members of other religions and in particular Jewish people with whom is shared a unique bond.

It includes a summary of the history of the declaration and its contents, details about its implementation, Australian responses and some practical activities for schools and parishes.

Through the Pontifical Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews and the Pontifical Commission on Interreligious Dialogue, these past 60 years have witnessed the development and growth of many commissions and committees throughout the world whose primary focus is the coming together of religions grounded upon mutual understanding and respect in the spirit of love.

“The coming together of the human family in fraternal love in the name of God is so vital for the survival of humanity,” Archbishop Nona said.

“All of us are made in God’s image and likeness, and share a union which we’ve barely started exploring. May we continue on the path to greater understanding and love, one for another.”

The reflection document can be found here: [60th Anniversary of Nostra Aetate: Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions](#)

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